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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

March 24, 2004

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RECYCLED PAPER

Linda Lake

Chair

Washington State Board of Health

P.O. Box 47990

Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Chair Lake,

I am writing to you regarding the draft rule on the onsite wastewater rules recently released by Washington State's Department of Health. As you know, the Department created the Onsite Rule Development Committee to meet with a variety of people and businesses around the state to develop a comprehensive plan for revised onsite wastewater rules.

First, let me state that I certainly appreciate all the work and time the committee put into this proposal. Also, I am aware of all the efforts put forth by various members of the community, including business leaders, industry representatives, private citizens and tribal members in order to produce a fair report to the department. All those involved should be commended for their time and effort.

However, after reviewing the draft, I remain apprehensive about the levels of protection proposed for the lakes, streams, and waterways around Washington State. Onsite septic systems still pose a pollution threat to valuable resources such as shellfish beds and marine areas. As you are certainly aware, these resources are incredibly valuable to our magnificent state.

Failing or poorly maintained septic systems can have devastating effects on our environment. Therefore, I respectfully request that the Board of Health and Department of Health continue to work together in conjunction with the community to ensure that this rule is strengthened prior to the release of the final ruling later this year.

Sincerely,

NORM DICKS

Member of Congress

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WA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH